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THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-GIRL

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the SPECTACULAR SPIDER-GIRL

My name is *May "Mayday" Parker.*

I'm the daughter of *Spider-Man*--

--and I just wall-crawled into another steaming pile of *nasty.*

A *gang war* recently erupted between the *Black Tarantula,* the city's current *Kingpin of Crime*--

--and one of his bent-nose rivals.

Even though the big *T* has often aided me in the past--

--I figured I had a responsibility to help the police end this madness.

Not one of my *better* decisions!

Easy, Captain!

You don't want to ruin a perfectly good costume with an unhealthy dose of *blood splatter* and *brain matter.*

A MATTER OF TRUST!

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You've got a lot of brass, Spider-Girl.

Sneaking into police headquarters when you're still a *person of interest* in an ongoing murder investigation.

Give me one good reason why I shouldn't Mirandize you and march you into the nearest interrogation room.

Well... *uhhh*...I'll give you *two*.

First, the feds already have the alleged murderer in custody.

And, second, I want to prove I'm one of the good guys--

--by helping you end the *gang war* before anyone gets killed.

I know about you, *Captain Ruiz*.

You used to be a member of *Code: Blue*--the city's elite task force assigned to interface with *super heroes* and stop *super-menaces*.

I'm betting you can still tell the difference.

Okay, enthrall me...

What makes you think the NYPD needs your help?

What exactly are you *offering*?

A JOB--?!
You're offering me a job?
Why would I want to work for a leather freak like you?
The name's Man Mountain Marko, sweetie.
I was you, I wouldn't be using that particular f-word.
The rest of the economy may be in the toilet, but it ain't too bad for bankers, Wall Streeters or career criminals--
--not that there's all that much difference between us.
This gang war is worth MILLIONS--maybe even BILLIONS--to the winner.
People like us can carve out a decent slice of that pie--
--if we choose the right side.
What should I call you, anyway?
I recently adopted the name April Parker--
--but I'm the real daughter of Spider-Man.
The real May Parker.
The other May is my clone--no matter what SHE claims!
You can use May*ahem*... errrr...that's right...
MAYHEM!
And I couldn't care less about money.
No problem. You gotta want something.
Everybody does.
Call me you ever figure out what it is.
I'll do my best to make it happen.

Le Grande Excelsior...

The situation is becoming critical.

If this gang war continues, we may have to apply for a government bailout.

Bad enough revenues are plummeting and expenses are skyrocketing, I just received a report that someone in a *Spider-Girl*-like costume attacked our people.

You think it was the *real Spider-Girl*--

--or could it have been her *clone?*

I assume you're referring to the *hybrid,* Araña.

We honestly don't know which one is the original or the copy.

RINGGGG!

Whatever!

The point is that one of them may have signed on with *Silverback.*

Everyone must be smelling blood in the water if even your so-called friends are turning against you.

Yes, I'll inform him at once.

I hate to agree with Araña, master... but she does have a point.

That was *Spider-Girl* on the line--

--or, at least, someone who sounds like her.

She wants to arrange a meet.

Don't go, Fabian! It could be a trap.

If it is the real Spider-Girl, I assume she is going to try to convince me to make peace with *Don Silvo "Silverback" Barraca.*

The question is--how far is she willing to go?

Is she still trustworthy?

Or does she intend to betray the *Black Tarantula?*

Can I really trust *Ruiz?*

She said she just wants to open a *dialogue* with the Tarantula.

I'm only playing matchmaker.

Yeah.

Right.

So why do I feel so *guilty?*

I'm just trying to save lives.

Why do I think this will all blow up in my face--

--like usual!

Oh, well! Time to put on a smile and head downstairs to--

April!

I haven't seen you since school got out.

How was your day?

Uhhhh... okay, I guess.

Nothing out of the ordinary.

Unless you count my run-in with *Marko.*

You do anything interesting?

Uhhhh... I have to say, *"No, not really."*

Because I promised Ruiz I'd keep our meeting confidential.

Some days are like that-- *borrrrrring!*

Oh, yeah!

Should I confide in April?

Or is it better to keep a few secrets?

Elsewhere...

What do you think *Spider-Girl* is like when she isn't in costume?

You talking about the *real* Spider-Girl, Wes-- or the one in our comic book?

CAFÉ INDIGO

The real one, Jimmy.

That's easy because she's *never* out of costume. I mean--*C'mon, Wes!* Secret identities are so *'80s*.

You really think *American Dream, J2* or any of the other *Avengers* ever take off their masks?

No way, man!

I'll admit some heroes like the *Fantastic Five* may be 24-7--

--but you're wrong about *Spider-Girl*.

?

?

?

"I'm sure she's just a regular teenager under those webs."

You've worked with Captain Ruiz for a couple years now, Dad.

What's she really like?

Nice lady. Smart. Decisive, but fair and she really listens when you make a suggestion.

I assume she's focusing on the gang war.

We all are.

That reminds me. I heard the strangest rumor at the precinct today.

Seems some unidentified vigilante in a fright mask and a black and blue costume--

Peter, *please*--! I'd like to change the subject.

The girls promised to stop web-swinging until this horrid gang war is over.

The least we can do is be supportive by talking about something pleasant for once.

Don't you agree, girls?

Whatever you say, mom.

April merely nods--

--before flashing a mischievous grin that makes me wonder about her secrets.

I spend the rest of the night avoiding my mother's eyes and the next day...

ZZZZZZZZ

MIDTOWN HIGH SCHOOL

Hello--?

I delivered your lovely invitation to my employer.

He assumes it will be a private meeting.

Uhhhh... sounds good to me!

Excellent! He has a suggestion for time and place.

I take down the info--

--and immediately call Ruiz.

I heard from the Tarantula.

We're on, but he's only expecting me.

I understand.

Call me later and we'll work out the details.

Drasco, tell *Code: Blue* the meet's a go.

You sure you want those hot dogs, Captain?

CAPT. RUIZ

Absolutely! Only a naïve fool would confront the *Black Tarantula* without the appropriate backup.

The Tarantula may be a professional criminal, but he's always had my back.

I guess that's why I'm feeling like a total traitor when I suddenly round a corner--

--and find *April* with *Gene Thompson!*

What do you say, April?

Let me get back to you.

Is my former boyfriend really interested in April--

--or is this just another one of his head games?

What's with Mr. Thompson?

He's wants to get together later.

Why?

Duh! You couldn't possibly be *that* dense.

Oh, great! How do I keep them apart without coming across like a jealous ex?

Any chance you could cancel?

This has to stay just between us, but I was planning a little *web* thing later.

Ooooo! Looks like I'm not the only bad girl in the family.

I knew your poor mother was just fooling herself.

I'll tell Gene the bad news and join you on the roof.

What have I done? Not only did I break a promise--

--I compounded my crime by dragging April into it.

You okay, May?

You look like you're carrying the weight of the world.

I... I'm fine, Wes.

I'm here if you need a friend.

That's very sweet of you.

Any chance we could get together after school?

There's something we need to discuss.

Uhhhh...can it wait until tomorrow?

I'm afraid I already have plans and I'm running late.

Don't let me keep you!

I can't even guess the kind of pressures you're under.

W-what's that supposed to mean?

Does he suspect I'm *Spider-Girl*?

Talk about an interesting development...

What is it, Don Silvo?

My contact in police headquarters informs me that a secret meeting has been scheduled between *Spider-Girl*, *Captain Ruiz* and the *Black Tarantula*.

What'cha want done, boss?

Even though they didn't invite me, I'll still send a gift.

Guido, I want you to call the *Supplier*--

"--and hire his top *assassination team!*"

Hope I haven't kept you waiting!

That Thompson boy can be so clingy at times.

I don't know what's more disturbing...

...imagining *April* with *Gene*.

Or worrying about *Wes*.

According to Davida and Courtney, he's learned something important about Spider-Girl.

I'll use my hybrid powers and be ready in a sec.

I like Wes. He's a good guy. But I don't know him well enough to trust him with my biggest secret.

All set and ready to-- *whoops!*

You say something, April?

Just... *TA-DAAA!*

I update April as we head across town...

So you got the plan?

I'm going to try to convince the *Tarantula* that peace is in everybody's best interest--

--and he can start the process by meeting with *Ruiz*.

What is it with you and these stupid *Kumbya* moments?

Why don't we just beat him bloody and leave him for the cops?

Always a pleasure to have you onboard, April.

Since the Tarantula expects me to come alone, you're going to wait outside--

--and use *this* to alert Ruiz when I give you the signal.

For *this*, I gave up a date with *Gene*?!?

Nearby...

We need to keep a low profile, Lieutenant Yaneski.

I don't want anyone jumping the gun.

What's the *go-sign*, Captain?

Spider-Girl assured me we'll know it when we see it, Tank.

I still say delaying is a mistake.

We should hit the building--

"--as soon as we confirm the Tarantula's arrival."

Place looks deserted.

It's *not*.

From the way my *spider-sense* is tingling, I'm done feeling guilty--

--because the Black Tarantula also *lied*.

He's not alone, either.

This must be where they store all those decorative apples they sometimes plant around the city.

Honey, I'm here!

Uh-oh!

I wasn't surprised to hear from you, Spider-Girl.

I knew you'd want to discuss the gang war.

I just hope-

--that's *all* you want.

What's *that* supposed to mean?

Must you insult my intelligence?

Do you really think I wouldn't scout the area--

--and notice the massive police presence a few blocks away?

Oh, Ruiz! What have you *done?!*

You should talk.

How many goons did *you* bring?

What are you-- *wait!*

You're *right.*

I sense them now.

I ♥ NY

We're SURROUNDED!

Y-you mean these *aren't* your guys?!

Hardly.

I assume my competitor sent them.

I thought I could trust you, my dear.

You apparently suffer from loose lips.

That's not *fair!*

I was just trying to help.

I thought I could *end* the violence by bringing in the police.

Oh, really?!

How's *that* working out for you?

I'll let you know in a minute.

If the police really are outside, they should join the party.

Hey, Gene.

It's me.

Very funny, wise guy.

THWAPP!

No, this thing with Mayday is a total bust.

I'm bored out of my everloving skull.

I am very disappointed with you, Spider-Girl.

I thought we had established a *bond*--

--with a certain level of *trust*.

I...I was only trying to protect innocent lives.

Someone--*maybe an awful lot of* ***some-ones***--will *die* if you allow this war to continue!

Where is *Ruiz*?

What's keeping her?

POLIC

Has *April* failed me?

We need to put our differences aside and work together--

--to END the war!

I might have listened to you once.

No more!

Not since you betrayed me.

If you value your life, you will not contact me, again.

Tarantula, wait! You can't leave it like this! Please! Give me a chance to--oh, no!

Get BACK, you idiots-- NOW!

KWOOOOM!

He set a booby-trap to prevent anyone from following.

W-What was that?!

J-just the TV.

I gotta go, Gene--

"--Mayday needs me!"

I'm guessing that's our signal, Captain.

So am I, Yaneski!

Go!

GO!

KTWAMMM!

This is the POLICE!

Everyone, get face down on the floor--with arms extended--and fingers spread.

What kept you, Captain?

I was waiting on *you,* little lady.

You're not going anywhere until I get a full report.

What caused the explosion?

Who are these masked fools?

POLICE

Where's the *Black Tarantula?*

Hands *off* the merchandise!

You want answers?

You have a room full of suspects to interrogate.

I just have one question.

Who jeopardized my life by calling the bad guys?!?

How come the police took so long to arrive, April?

I don't know.

I flashed the *spider-signal* as soon as I heard from you.

You should have just listened to me--

--and beaten the *Tarantula* bloody.

Maybe so...

Things couldn't have gone worse if I had.

There's obviously a traitor in the mix.

Did the leak come from Ruiz's camp or mine?

I have only one suspect in mind...

APRIL!

TO BE CONTINUED...